

THE IRREPRESSIBLE CONFLICT

BY

S. D. CARPENTER.

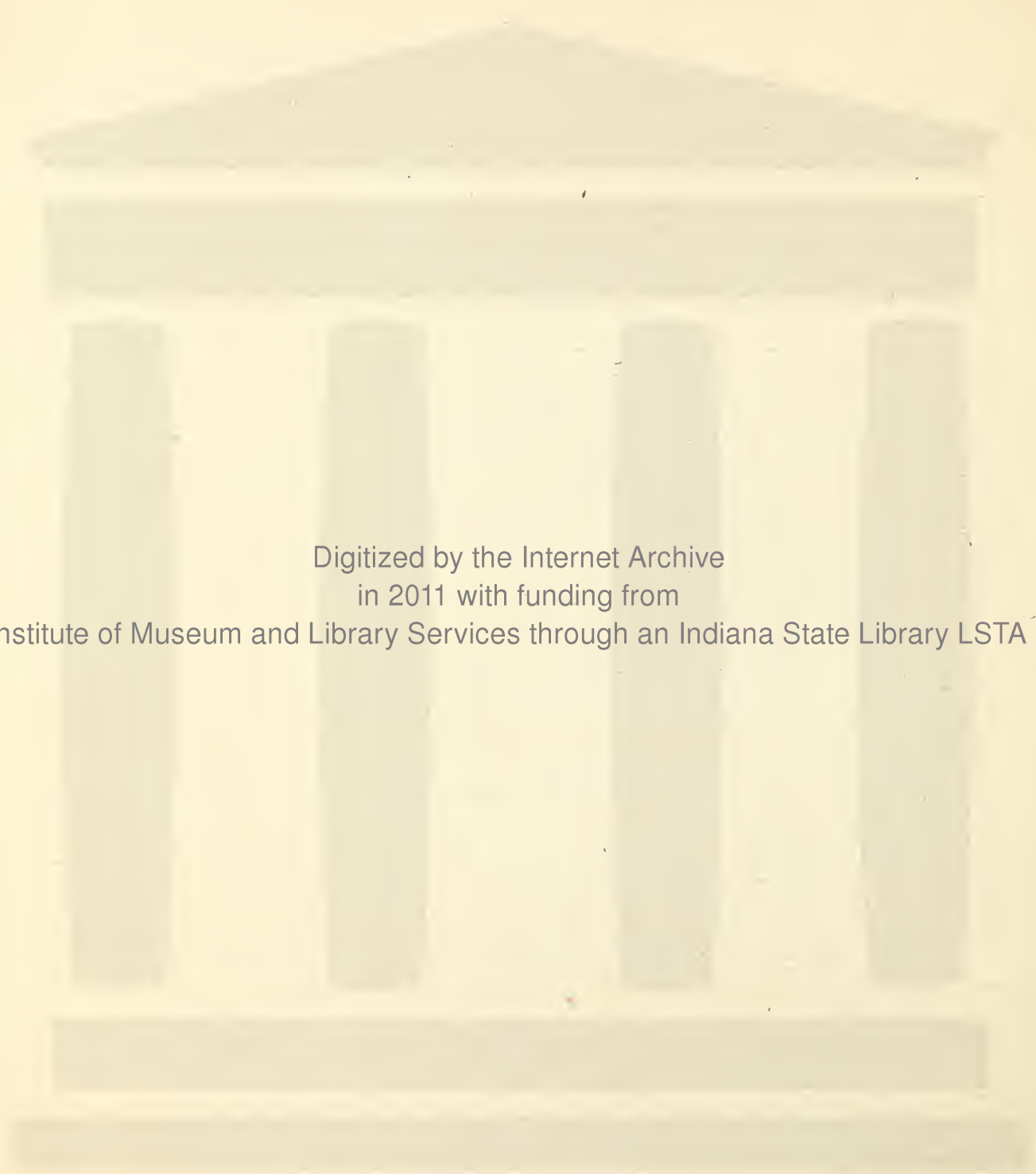
MADISON, WIS.

1862

JUDD STEWART

NEW YORK

1914



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*Compliments -
Judd Stewart*

NOTE

This play is printed just as it was originally issued (errors of all sorts being retained). Only the notes are added.

PREFACE

DURING the last three evenings of 1862 Mr. S. D. Carpenter, then Editor of the *Wisconsin Patriot*, of Madison, Wisconsin, prepared for the "New Year's Message" of the carriers of that paper "THE IRREPRESSIBLE CONFLICT," herein reproduced.

Since the death of President Lincoln a number of plays have been written which have dealt principally with the assassination and the conspirators, but this production of Mr. Carpenter seems to be one of the earliest efforts to dramatize the character of President Lincoln; and since the original issue of 1863 has entirely disappeared, it seems to me proper to reproduce it.

In my collection of Lincolniana are the following additional dramas regarding President Lincoln:

The Administrative Telegraph, or How It Is Done. (A three act play contained in "The Washington Despotism Dissected" in articles from the *Metropolitan Record*. New York, 1863).

Lincoln's Anfang, Glück und Ende, a drama in twelve acts by Edward Renlöm, Coburg, Germany, 1865.

The Play of Destiny as played by actors from the Kingdom of the dead, etc.—By Stephen W. Downey, New Creek, West Va., 1867.

A National Drama (in *The Beautiful World* for July, 1872).

The Tragedy of Abraham Lincoln, in five acts, by an American Artist—Glasgow, Scotland, 1876.

Madame Surratt, A Drama in five acts by J. W. Rogers—Washington, D. C. 1879.

J. Wilkes Booth, or the National Tragedy, in five acts by William A. Luby; Kalamazoo, Mich. 1880.

The Tragedy of Abraham Lincoln, or the Rise and Fall of the Confederate States, in five acts, S. Whitaker Grove—1881.

Abraham Lincoln, Historical Tragedy in five acts, by Col. J. W. Bryant, Copyright 1886.

Abraham Lincoln, Drama in five acts by "F. S. Heresford" (Schnaacke) Omaha, Neb. First act in print; balance in manuscript.

Abraham Lincoln—An Historical Drama, by McKee Rankin, (and Archibald Forbes) in four acts. In manuscript.

OCTOBER, 1914

JUDD STEWART

THE IRREPRESSIBLE CONFLICT,

(BEGINNING OF THE END)

OR

THE RISE, PROGRESS AND DECLINE OF "ONE IDEA,"

INCLUDING THE PRINCIPAL ACTS IN THE LIFE OF ABRAHAM THE FIRST

IN ELEVEN ACTS

PROLOGUE

The laugh comes in *here*—things now
Doth wear a weighty and a serious brow!
Sad, foul and bloody—full of crime and woe—
Such mournful scenes as cause the eye to flow,
I'll anon present. Those with hearts, may here,
If they feel that way inclined, let drop a tear!
My subject will deserve it. Such as give
Me money, out of hope that they may live
To see the end of war and tragedy's alarm—
Rejoice in Peace—fearing naught of harm;
And read my "drama," how soon they'll see
That might and folly hunt in pairs for misery!
And if you can be "merry" then I fear,
A son may dance upon his mother's bier!

ACT I.

SCENE—*In the Chicago Wigwam.*

[*Enter Politicians, Cormorants and others.*]

1st Pol.— *Hoc considerationi tuæ est*, my Lords,
We this day convene for most holy purpose,
To name a ruler that shall much improve

On the sorry ill-haps of King James, the Fourth.

Our choice must be an hermafrodite;
Who hath a mealey mouth for utterance
Of sweet things, concerning sable Knights
Of yam, hoe cake and cruel cat-o'-nine-tails!

The leader of our tribe must have no taint
Of ill omen, or Fuss and Feathers 'bout him!
With all the points of most honorable ignorance,
He must be fit for any point of compass—
And for treason, stratagem and spoils;
One that in town and ranche conservative,
May 'list the rabble, with no ill precedent
To 'pear in judgment 'gainst his sure success!
And who, in districts radical, at once,
May carry all before him, as the embodiment
Of the most rabid, redundant dogmas!

We must the deepest current follow,
For that doth the proper channel indicate,
To the sea, where fishes do most school,
And where our nets, if cast within aright,
May, in fruition, become our *finished* hopes.

We must our flaunting banners fitly garnish
With emblems and mottoes the public nerves to tickle,
Such as *Retrenchment*, *Freedom* and *Reform*!
These will careless eyes amuse, and then,
The public ear to charm, send out our Ciceroes,
To mount the rostrum, and this catch-vote trinity
Expound, and condemn with hortor's holy unction,
The rascally counterparts that doth afflict us,
Under King James, the Fourth!¹

Such, my Lords,

Is in short, my plan, success to master;
What say you to't?

¹ James Buchanan, then President—the other Jameses being Madison, Monroe and Polk.

2d Pol.

For one,

I'm most charmingly delighted, faith,
With all the noble Lord hath uttered !
My only fault-finding in this doth lie:—
That sundry details hath His Grace omitted
Which alone can vouchsafe success!
'Tis known to all, the Western Little Giant²
Stands at this time, like a wall of fire
Betwixt us and our goal of hope.

*A Voice—(Interruptingly)—*We must dispatch him.

2d Pol.—(*Continuing*)— Yea, that we must !

But how? That's the most important question.

[*Scratches his head, exclaiming:*]

I have it, by Jupiter!—at last I have it.
The Democratic Sachems are in quarrel !
I would encourage their Charleston split
By a lever and entering wedge, at Baltimore.
The enemies of the famous Little Giant
Are bent on revolt—yea, secession,
And if we give but one grain of 'couragement
They will secede, and thus so weaken
The Democratic hosts, that we'll be sure
To win—not by our strength, but their weakness !
I've had a word with their great Benjamin,³
The Senatorial Jew from Molasses town.
He hath a most ferocious speech agreed
To utter in the forum of the "Pantheon,"
Which, in return, did I stipulate,
To print and circulate two million copies,
As seed for Northern fallow fields.
Thus, may we use our foeman's steel

² Stephen A. Douglas.

³ Judah P. Benjamin then senator, "Molasses Town" is probably New Orleans.

To conquer, though dragons follow after.

Office Seeker—

Bravo! bravo!!

The plan will office and the spoils secure us—
A most welcome dish to stomachs long in fast!
For, outside the crib so long we've anxious stood,
Like the fifth calf, our turn still waiting,
That any means to reach the pap, I welcome!
And mock all fear of consequences!

Compunction.—

Be cautious, friends, I chide,

There may in this tub lie concealed, a cat,
Or acid, that may cramp us with the bellyache!
Honesty may, e'en in politics be virtue;
And as Harry Clay did on occasion utter,
"I would rather be right than President!"

Therefore, mock I these villainous propositions.

Voices in the Pit.—

Hustle him out!

He's got a conscience, a quite conclusive fact,
That he to our tribe belongeth not!

Voices from the Rostrum.—Away with him!

[*Exit Comp. in a shower of hisses.*]

Delegate.—

Come, come my Lords, to business.

With the platform, and campaign rôle I'm pleas'd.
But who shall be the Patriarch to lead
Our forces thro' the gloomy valley 'fore us?

Our aching bones do need a goodly med'cine!
We hate the south, and the south hate us!
No shock of earth shall sunder our two hates!
The question is, who'll so lead us o'er Charybdis,
That we may 'scape dark, yawning Scilla?

As a fit beginning, will I name

ABRAHAM, the tall, and jocose Sucker Barrister;
Who, though a lion in a Western bar-room,
Will a juvenile sheep become—at court!

So docile, as to mould like Burgundy wax,
 And as King Henry to Exeter remarked,
 True, when the lion fawns upon the lamb,
 The lamb will never cease to follow him.
 Give me a flexible prince—mules I 'bominate.

New Yorker—

Most noble Lords,
 If I am permitted here my mouth to ope,
 I will suggest the noble Duke of York,⁴
 Who hath too oft been shelv'd by expediency.

If we his claims now do overlook,
 We dry the fount from which the sea of thought
 Sucks its everlasting fill.

Give us brains,
 And less expediency, in alopatic doses—
 A mind that greatness blends with actions—
 An intellect above rail or hair-splitting quacks—
 A something better than mere nose of wax.
 Above all others, 'tis my oft expressed belief
 That William, the Conqueror, is the man
 To lead our conquering hosts.

Contractor.—I agree, in part, with the noble wight
 Who hath regaled our ears with brains and sense,
 And that so urgently the Duke of York doth press.
 I too, like him, am a devotee of brains !
 But I confess, my faith is somewhat shattered
 In the insinuation that all the brains extant
 Are by the Duke of York monopolized.

All admit that where graces challenge grace
 And brains oppress the skulls that hold them,
 That our Simon⁵ hath no proud party peer !

⁴ William H. Seward.

⁵ Simon Cameron.

Brains and money are his strongest holt !
 These are graces, that when once combined
 Will sweep the board, and let us into clover !
 I therefore propose that Simon be
 Our candidate and nominee !
 He would lead us to the vast public larder,
 Where, we'd fill our pinch'd and billious stomachs !

New Yorker,—(*Aside*.)— [Provided always,
 That Simon himself, had *first* been gorged !]
 [*Laughter and hisses in the pit.*]

Sir Puke.— Since thus your favorites are urg'd
 I offer Edward,⁶ the noble Barron *von* St. Louis;
 He will great Border strength conciliate,
 And our platform fringe would soil the least.
 I warn you, slight not his stronger claims.

Sucker.— Talk not of Edward's "claims !"
 Bear to the slaughter-house his mangled corpse !
 Away with such bloody-bones pretenders; for,
 Honest Abraham shall, of our victorious tribe,
 Become the Patriarch, *de jure*.

I move the previous question !
 Put out the lights—each one take care of self—
 Clear the pit, and let the vote be quickly taken !
 The motion's carried—now to honest ballot !
 One—twice—yea to twenty rounds, at least—
 All hail to honest Abe, our gallant chief !
 [*Exit omnes, after a short "collection."*]

⁶ Edward Bates

ACT II.

SCENE . . . *After Election . . . Springfield Hermitage.*

A MEDLEY:

DESCRIPTIVE . . . PATHETIC . . . POETIC—PROPHETIC AND NATURAL

[Enter numerous Cormorants.]

1st Cor. . . . How now, my liege Lord,
The returns do indicate thou art chosen King.
Egad, I knew the Wide Awakes would save you !
'Twas *my* influence that carried things in our parts !
In fact, no one did e'er such forces muster !
At great expense, did I sweat and work for thee,
And of all the jokes thou hast e'er perpetrated,
The joke of thy success doth the climax cap,
And, as your Grace is mighty fond of jokes,
'Tis safe to guess you *this* do extra relish !
By the way, your Grace, how about the offices !
Is my sight good for the Tumbuctoo Charge?
I see you hesitate. I'll not o'erpress my suit
Now, since I fear the news hath o'ercome you.
What, your Grace, are you ill . . . displeased . . .
Or, what's the matter? I ne'er did see you
Put on so solemn airs, 'pon honor . . . never !

Abraham . . . Nay, away, good bore,
I'm neither ill nor sore displeased, withall.
'Tis only a modest fear that I may meet
With troubles worse than Liliput encountered !
I'm no Jackson, as the world will see anon !
Troubles are thick'ning in the southern zone,
Like unto steaming mush o'er the peasant's fire !
Our late allies who did assist to kill off "Dug,"
And thus to the Imperial Throne lift me,
Hath at my success snuff'd great offence

And now do threaten dissolution, which if it come,
 Will force me to sue for Democratic succor !
 For, our Wide Awakes, I fear, tho' good to burn
 Their midnight *ile*, and to vocalize the streets
 With nocturnal music, harsh to ears polite,
 Will hardly prove efficient in the tug of war !

[*Enter the Dauphin (Bob⁷) with the latest newspaper.*]

Dauphin . . . Good sire, from the post am I come, amain,
 To signify that the rebels' backs are up,
 Who, many loyal victims do put to sword !
 Send succor quick, and stop the rage, betime,
 Before the wounds do grow incurable,
 For, being fresh, there is yet much hope of help.

Abraham . . . As I feared, this spark will prove a raging fire,
 If wind and fuel be bro't to feed and fan it !
 But, Dauphin, I'm neither King or Regent yet,
 And if I were, I might well question
 Whether I could roll back the flaming tide,
 With more success than hath King James.
 Tho' rather than jeopard all, as he hath,
 Would I have lost my life betimes,
 Than bring a burden of dishonor home,
 For as Julius Cæsar, am I chivalric,
 But, like the ostrich, that in Sahara's sands
 Doth hide its head, and thinks nobody sees
 Its form, because it sees nobody,
 I must, from vulgar eyes conceal my purpose !
 'Twill be time enough for secondary matters,
 When I've toss'd to friends the bones of office.

2d Cor. . . . Most noble Sucker,
 Thou dost wisdom almost divine betray !
 The loaves and fishes ! Ah, most gracious Sire !

⁷ Robert T. Lincoln

Them's of our edifice the corner-stone . . .
 The *alpha* and *omega* of our Chicago Platform !
 I do most freely applaud your Grace's views,
 And I trust your Grace will, in due time,
 Heed my claims for the mission to St. Cloud !
 Here's my papers, which my faith will prove,
 In the irrepressible conflict, I love.

3d Cor Aye, yes, my friend hath fitly spoken;
 Thou art the hero for these dreadful times !
 I pray your Grace, *my* claims to also note.
 But little do *I* care, your Grace, for pelf and place,
 But then *my friends* do urge with grave concern
 That as 'Charge to Quito I'm most fit to serve.
 What says your Grace ? Can I count upon
 The gratification of my most urgent friends ?

Abraham . . . Most valued friends,
 You presume much and do squeeze my honor,
 As old Mrs. Battles said when being hugged
 By the ungallant bear, in wanton mood !
 I fain would to you all, serve pottage,
 Yea, as ye have served myself, of late;
 But, yet, 'tis meet young eagles should not feed
 Outside the natal crib.

 Therefore, wait I pray,
 Until my advent to the Fed'ral Mecca,
 And when ensconced within the palace kitchen,
 I may cogitate upon your several "claims,"
 Until then, my friends....*adieu!*

 [*Exit Abraham and the Dauphin.*]

4th Cor . . . Well, my waiting friends,
 In the language of our old joker *ice-gerent*,
 I think this devilish cool ! Yes, and I may add,

The North Pole is a monster red-hot poker,
 Compared with this frigid, gruff "Adieu!"
 Why, his Grace dismissed us so curtly,
 That my recommendations lie congealed
 To the nether end of my untouch'd pocket!
 The great altitude his Grace hath reached,
 Reminds me of the monkey up the pole!

5th Cor. . . . Ha! ha! So! so!
 Must we not take such as our betters give,
 And ask no questions? Our Honest Abraham
 Will soon become *the* Government...all-in-all,
 And who that lispeth aught 'gainst *him*
 Will against the *Government* inveigh...
 That will be treason.

6th Cor. . . . True...it may be true.
 But then what 'comes of the great corner-stone
 Of our most solemn litany...*freedom?*

7th Cor. . . . O, ye worse than geese,
 To be thus hissing out complaints.
 Let's return and wait events!
 [*Exeunt Omnes, meeting at the door another swarm of Cor-*
morants.]

ACT III.

SCENE...*On the Road to Washington.*

[*Enter (the cars) Abraham, Q. Margaret, the Dauphin and Suit.*]

Abraham... (*in a soliloquizing and musing mood*)... [*Aside.*

[Ah, who'd have tho't some thirty years ago,
 When on the turbid, roaring Wabash
 I did a sea-worthy flat boat command,
 Or, when among the Hoosiers, mauling rails,...

Or jokes in some country grocery cracking,
That I, alone, of all this mighty people,
Should thus have been found most worthy
To rule as monarch.

Verily,

How little man doth know his mental powers,
Until by circumstance they luminate!

From small beginnings to lofty heights
Have I ascended by the ladder Douglas made,
Until I'm the observed of all observers!
And my name upon all tongues is hing'd.

I'm to that Mecca on my winding way,
Where politicians most do congregate!
With garlands hither my path is garnish'd,
And at each station will I meet acclaims
Of curiosity-seeking multitudes.

Yet,

Alas! I fear, that in the sequel of that path,
There lies concealed, a bed of thorns,
And envenomed dragon's teeth, by acres.]
The air feels chilly . . . the ague threatens!
Dauphin, pass the bottle!

*[Here the train arrives at I——s Station....Multitudes flock
around and clamor for a speech.]*

Abraham— My generous friends,
I am rejoiced to see you, and should judge that you
Are right smart glad to welcome me.

[Loud huzzas and cries of "Tell us what you're going to do."]

Abraham— Well, my friends, my mood is none too amiable,
Yet, since you ask it, I've not the least objection
To 'quaint you that to yonder Mecca do I haste,
And what I there do, depends upon the fates,
And what the good Duke of York may urge.

The horizon with vast events o'erhangs,
 And womanish minds with fear are wrung.
 But, as "nobody's hurt," I'll pass—adieu !
[Tremendous cheering—as the train starts.]

SCENE 2d—*Hotel at Harrisburg—Midnight.*
[Enter Messenger in great haste.]

Mess... How, now sir Boniface,
 Is Father Abraham thy guest? I would see him.
 I am son^s of the Duke of York, and
 Have I business of the most pressing moment
 With His Highness, our beloved Abraham.
 I would see him instanter. The occasion presses.

Boniface... Abraham is now my honor'd guest;
 Some two hours past did he and suit retire,
 To woo Nature's sweet restorer, for
 He's journey'd long, and needs repose.
 He bad me to his slumbering presence
 Admit no mortal wight.

 Thou must disturb him not,
 For on his health depends the nation's life.

Mess... I must, and will disturb him,
 For on his instant knowledge of my mission
 Depends his own most precious life !
 I ask an instant audience . . . yea, *demand* it,
 With His Highness, for I possess a fearful secret,
 Sent by the Duke of York, in lightning haste !
 On which may'st depend our weal or woe.
 Come, this instant, point out the way
 To Abraham's apartments, or by St. George,
 I'll grind your bones to fertilizing plaster.
 Betwixt yon ceiling and my sledge hammer fists.

Boniface ... (Aside) ...

[By hokey !

This fellow's either crazy, drunk or earnest.
There's something in his eye that tokens resolution
I'll to the chamber of my guest announce him,
But should he prove to be a fiendish regicide,
And should His Highness slay while he's my guest,
I'm busted as a Boniface, forever.]

Well, stranger, since your demand doth seem
So urgent, honest, and of so vast concern,
I will at once comply; but mind you, sir,
The least attempt at harm will 'rouse
All slumbering Harrisburg, and 'pon my word,
The Susquehanna fishes shall sate their greed,
And dine upon your carcass.

Come, sir, as I lead the way, follow thou,
With steps as light as unwrought cotton.

*[Boniface and Messenger depart for No. 1, bearing
each a flambeau.]*

SCENE 3d. . . *They arrive at No. 1, and give heavy raps.*

Abraham (within, half waking.) What's up, my
spouse?

Heard you not that racket? Strike a light!
The Dauphin out of bed hath fallen!

[The visitors rap again.]

The Dauphin hath his neck quite broken—and
There goes the j—n. Fire! Thieves !

[More and louder rapping.]

Who's at my chamber this late hour o'night?
Speak without, or my Derringer I'll level;
And wo be to him that my nocturnal sanctum
Doth invade at this unseasonable hour !

Abraham . . . (*soto voce*,) [Some office seeker,
I dare say, who plays this clever ruse
To press his selfish suit. However,
As there may be danger of some fell garrote,
I'll grant him ingress, and probe the 'larum.]
[*Unlocks the door.*]
Walk in, *knight* errants,
And be quiet, while I the gas do luminate.
[*Lights the gas.*]

Abraham . . . (interrupting.) What plot, pray?
Mean you to say some arch fiend is plotting
Harm against my person? Speak!

Mess... Yea, that do I, your Highness.
List, and ye shall learn the upshot on't.
My noble Sire, who awaits your Highness,
At the palace gate, hath, like a dashing rocket,

Sent me to warn you of the fatal danger;
That the vile Plugs of the Monumental City
Hath a hatching for your swift destruction.

A trusty friend, who had the secret gained,
Did, on the wings of extra pressure steam, fly
To 'quaint my father of the plot and plotters.

By the information, the story runneth thus:.....
To-morrow, as the Programme's gazetted,
You are through seething Baltimore to pass,
The Rebels hath their machinations well arranged
To give yourself and suit a fitting welcome,
And as you the leading thoroughfare do pass,
The Plugs, in dissembling curiosity,
Will in vast array press upon you;
And at the concerted signal from their chief,
A row and tumult will commence, amain,
And waxing hotter 'till it doth culminate
Into a riot of fearful motive power!

Bowie knives, rifles and revolving shooters,
In that *melée* are all to play their purpose;
And, when the seed of this infernal plot be ripe,,
A "chance shot" . . . perhaps a dozen . . . will pierce you.
And yet, no one aimed it . . . 'twas random "accident,"
And *accidents*, you know, are seldom honored
By compunctions that at the death go weeping.

Such, your Highness, is the full programme,
And such your danger, most imminent.
Here is a note from the Duke's own hand,
With particulars full. Read, and at once fly
Hence, by other routes, *incog*.

[*Abraham takes letter and tremblingly reads.*]

Abraham . . . But what, pray, *can* I do?
This note doth post me of your father's fears,

That on all the highways to the Palace
There may assassins lie concealed.

Mess... For such contingency
Have we made provision, ample !
I have raised the *Curtin*⁹ from his couch,
The noble ruler of this Commonwealth,
Who hath arranged to cut the wires,
So they give no tongue that's contraband;
And thus announce, as *à la Mahomed*,
Your flight by night to Mecca.
The track is clear, and a special train
Awaits your Highness at the depot.

[*Presents a large bundle to Abraham.*]

Take this Scotch cap and monkish cloak,
And, when disguised therein, you've naught to fear,
For, by my soul, you'll cut such grotesque figure,
That e'en your spouse won't know you.

Abraham... Alas, I feel the pressure
Of your most kind regards. My inward fear
Doth move me your lead to follow;
But what of the morrow ? What fresh excuse
Can our friends invent, to reconcile the crowd,
That will by thousands, flock to see me ?
What will say the press, when in the wind
Of such a dodge....so very ludicrous ?
Will they not post me as an arrant coward,
When as brave as Cæsar I should appear ?
I must summon counsel, e'er I start
On such a steeple chase, *incognito*.
Hail the Gov'nor and his trusty friends,

⁹ Governor A.G. Curtin, of Pennsylvania.

That I may with him and them divide
This vast responsibility.

[Rings the bell.]

[Enter Boniface in great concern.]

Boniface . . . I am your most obsequious servant . . .

What will'st your Highness?

Abraham . . . I would you the Gov'nor summon.

I would confer with His Excellency, instantly.

Boniface . . . Aye, your Highness!

His Excellency is e'en now in waiting, just below.

I will announce him at once.

[Enter Governor and friends.]

Abraham . . . Welcome to my perturbed chamber,

Most excellent Gov'nor. I did thee summon

For counsel in this perplexing throe of fear!

Hast thou learned the story? If yea, at once

Proffer me advice, most just and honorable.

Gov . . . That I will, your Highness.

I know it all, and have contrived a mode

Which, though it will provoke much criticism,

Will save you, harmless as a suckling dove!

By all means, depart at once, in this disguise . . .

Yea, before your route with prying eyes

Shall be astir.

I will explain

Your absence on the morrow; so now depart . . .

Yea, go at once, for time is precious

Abraham . . . As you will; but O,

That I were a god, to shoot forth thunder

Upon those Baltimorean, abject "Uglies!"

Small things make base men proud. Those villains

Being captains of a gang, threaten more

Than Bargulus, the dread Illyrian Pirate!

But they shall yet pay interest on their folly !

Drones suck not eagles' blood, but rob bees !

It seems, indeed, impossible that I should die

By such dastard vassals as these Plug Uglies,

Whose vice move rage, but not remorse, in me ;

I go, of message from the Duke of York, but

I charge ye, take me swiftly to the Palace !

By vile Bezonians great men have died.

It was a Roman sworder and bandito slave

That great Tully murdered. Brutus' bastard hand

Stabbed Julius Cæsar, . . . savage Islanders

Pompey the Great, and Suffolk died by pirates . . .

But Abraham the First shall never fall

By Baltimore Plug assassins !

So, don my guise

And hence I post, a monkish refugee.

[Exeunt omnes, in great haste and secrecy.]

ACT IV.

SCENE . . . 4th of March.

[Abraham chooseth his counsellors, consisting of the Duke of York, Simon, the Leper, Gideon, the Foggy, Edward, the Barrister, Salmon, the Foxey, Caleb, of the family of Smiths, and Montgomery, the paragon.¹⁰

The time arrives for Abraham to doff the Scotch cap, &c., and put on the robes of power, and at 12 o'clock he, with his counsellors and soothsayers, leads a dashing pageantry for the Capitol to do some "tall swearing." The East portico, surrounded by thousands bayonets and civilians.]

[Enter King James,¹¹ sundry Lords, Nobles, &c.]

¹⁰ Seward, Cameron, Welles, Bates, Chase, Smith, Blair.

¹¹ Buchanan.

*Abraham . . . [Holding up his right hand and fixing his eyes on the
nude Statuary before him.]*

I now before this vast array
Of soldiers and civilians, am about to swear
To protect and preserve the nation's *Magna Charta*.
Witness, O, people and my God, that solemn oath.

Judge Taney . . . Most elevated Abraham !
Thou chosen ruler of the Jews and Gentiles
Of this great, dissevered commonwealth !
Know thou that I am the distinguished author
Of that little-understood and misquoted tale, Dred
Scott,

And that by our great charter, am I empowered
To exact of thee, before God, an oath,
That thou, abjuring all other potentates,
Powers, platforms, creeds and principalities,
Will faithfully execute the statutes,
Uphold the Constitution as I expound it,
And place in trust or office, none except
The faithful of your creed and party,
So help you, Simon and the "Balance."

Abraham . . . Most learn'd and ven'erable expounder
Of the law's delays and constitutional perplexities,
With profound delight have I heard thy speech,
And in the presence of thy August Self,
God and the people, do I offer solemn oath,
To abjure all other Potentates and Powers,
(Except Powers' Greek Slave and other Slaves,)
And that I will most faithfully execute the laws,
(And the rebels, if I can catch them,)
The Constitution in all things will I obey,
(Providing with my wish it interfereth not,)
And to office not a soul will I appoint,

Georgia, Alabama and Texas threaten . . .
The Mississippians are becoming huffy . . .
The Old Dominion wavers, and I fear
The whole caboodle will give us slip !
What shall be done, is now the question . . .
What *can* be done, is still a harder one.

Simon . . . I pray your Highness
Take little heed of these flying rumors.
Rest at ease 'till the offices be fill'd !
Our *friends* should be waited on
Before we pay attention to our foes !
Charity, your Highness, begins at home !

Gideon . . . Simon hath most fitly spoken.
'Tis clear that charity should *at home* begin:
And what greater charity than to give the spoils
To our most needy (yea, and seedy) friends,
Who hath swarmed around your Highness,
As a protecting armor, in your late peril,
And at the polls were most servicable?

Salmon . . . From such a *rôle* I must dissent;
Our country first, and afterwards the spoils,
Would be my motto at such time as this.

Simon . . . "Country" be d—d !
I've too many friends awaiting army contracts,
To trifle 'bout the "country," yet awhile !

[*Enter Messenger.*]

Mess.... Most mighty sovereign,
On our Eastern coast, the puissant rebels
Have attack'd and battered down Fort Sumter,
And they seem bent on more despr'ate mischief.
'Tis said that Beauregard commands them !
I assure your most Excellent Highness,
The very air is full of rumors. [Exit Messenger.]

Abraham . . . Some light foot friend

Post to old Nestor Scott, instanter.

Simon, thyself, or Catesby, where is he ?

Caleb . . . Catesby? He's among the rebel galleys !

Simon . . . I prithee, be calm !

'Twill be but an hour's bubble, then all is quiet;

To-morrow will I post a platoon of wide Awakes,

Who'll Charleston reduce to shreds . . . yea,

In six hours, by the watch!

Egad !

I'll make short work of these coward rebels!

Gideon . . . I pray your Highness, leave all to Simon,

He'll punish these reculant subjects !

[*Enter 2d Messenger, in haste.*]

Abraham . . . How, now, dolt !

What news? Why com'st thou in such haste ?

2d Mess . . . Why, my Lord! The rebels are in arms !

Jeff. Davis is proclaimed vicegerent ruler

Of one half your Highness' realms !

He calls your Highness usurper, openly !

He vows to crown himself in Washington !

His army is a vast, ragged multitude

Of hinds and peasants, nude and merciless !

Old Hickory's death and your success

Hath given them heart and courage to proceed !

All Republicans, Abolitionists and gentlemen

They call false catterpillars, and intend their death !

Abraham . . . O, graceless Rebels . . . !

Fire-eating serfs....they know not what they do!

Nestor . . . My gracious Lord,

Retire to Chicago, 'till I a force do raise

To put them down.

Queen Margaret . . . Ah, were the Little Giant King,
These fiendish Rebels would be soon appeased !

[*Enter another Messenger*]

3d Mess . . . Sad news, my Lords!

Stonewall's varlets hath near reached Long Bridge !
The citizens fly and forsake their homes !
The rascally people, thirsting after prey,
Join with the traitors, and they jointly swear
To spoil this City and your loyal court.

Our legions that did yesternight go forth
Into the Bull Run gorge to meet the Rebels,
Hath been repulsed in most disastrous slaughter,
And panic-struck, are flying hither;

And your highness,
Each soldier wears a look of o'er-exhaustion;
While curses long and loud do rend the air !
All talk of treachery, and most affirm
That Patterson¹² is a knave or fool!

Abraham . . . Merciful Heavens!

Is it come to this? My very palace gates
By a mob of ragged rebels threatened,
Whom we could beat by ballots, but not by swords !
I'll go the oysters, there's treachery in camp !

Simon . . . Then linger not, my Lord! Away ! take horse !

Abraham . . . Come, my Queen, Scott and our platform
Will, in this trying hour, succor us.

Q. Mar . . . My hope is gone, now Douglas is deceased.

Abraham . . . Farewell, my Lords,
Beware the Kentish rebels. To my palace
Will I retire, and note events.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

¹² General Robert Patterson.

ACT VI.

SCENE—*Cabinet Convention.**Abraham . . .*

How now, my Lords,

Have you pondered well the fearful "situation?"
The ill mishaps on Manassas' gory plains
Have wrought my mind to most nervous pitch.
What think you of a change in commander
Of our grand Potomac Army!

There's Achilles,¹³

The chivalrous West Virginia hero,
Who can from Stonewall bring those honors off,
Which alone can rid us of Jeff Davis,
The centrifugal Hector of the South!

What say you to Achilles, the young Napoleon?
Yet, in the trial, much opinion dwells—
For now, our party taste our dear repute,
With their finest palates. They trust to me,
And yet, *they* choose, and only ask my sanction—
Using me as a manikin, merely.

It is supposed,

That he who goes forth to meet the Southern Hector,
Issues from our own well studied choice,
And should disaster follow, wo betide us.

Simon . . .

Give pardon to my speech;

Therefore, 'tis meet that Achilles meet not Hector!
Let us, like merchants, show our foulest wares,
And think, perchance, they'll sell, if not
The luster of the better shall exceed,
By showing the baser lot at first!

Consent not that Achilles and Hector meet,
For both our honor and our party interest
Are dogg'd by two strange followers—

¹³ Mc Clellan.

I mean the radical and conservative *pressure*.—

Achilles is a chieftain of Democratic stock,

He's valiant, and may win too many laurels !

We must to our party interest have an eye !

Abraham . . . In that light, I don't exactly see it.

Simon . . . What glory Achilles wins from Hector,

Were he of our party, we should all share,

But success would make his party insolent,

And we had better parch in Afric's sun,

Than in the pride of Achilles' glory !

No, let us make a lottery,

And by device, let blockhead Ajax draw

The man to fight with Hector. Among *ourselves*,

Give him allowances for the better man,

For that will physic most, the proud Democracy,

Who rail in loud applause, and make them fall

Their crests, that prouder than blue iris bends !

If the dull, brainless Ajax comes safe off,

We'll dress him up in voices! Should he fail,

Yet, go we under our good opinion still,

That we have *better* men. But, hit or miss,

Our plan one good shape of sense assumes—

Ajax employed, plucks down Achilles' plumes !

D. of Y . . .

My Lord Simon

Hath woven a most ingenious web, which

Might, and then it might not catch

The silly summer flies that buzz around

The purlieus of our royal palace. But I,

More foxey, would web for gallinippers—

They do bite and sting.

No, we must not

Our brave Achilles jump by any noodle;

For should aught of ill betide our arms,

'Twill be to party scheming charged !

The public is a tiger, which, when by degrees,
Tamed and docillated to one's own will,
Can by silken strings of sophistry be led:
But when fresh from jungles of the native herd,
'Tis no common plaything, and might, anon
Prove dangerous. We must be cautious !

[*Enter Page.*]

Page . . . Please your Highness,
I am press'd by a seedy courtier, just arrived,
With pale and livered face, and greasy wardrobe,
To ask him audience with your Lordships.
Shall I announce him ?

Abraham . . . Who is he, and what his purpose ?

Page . . . Please your Highness,
I know him not, and can but from his exterior jib
Describe him.

Simon . . . Well, well, what looks he like ?

Page . . . And by the Powers that made me,,
I should be puzzled to daguerreotype him.
He's crowned with a slouched hat, *à la Mose*—
Coat and jacket drab as pale charity—
Pants of the same fabric, closely pack'd
Inside his monstrous stogas.

Such, your Lordship,
Are his quaint externals, which to other eyes,
More vulgar, 'pear as though once were clean,
Tho' now with grease and ink befuddled!
The sheepish looking stranger did flat refuse
To send his card, and I would you caution,
Scan him well, lest some cannibal spy
Shall for supper take your measure.

Abraham (aside.) . . . [Greeley, by thunder !
There's no mistaking that quaint description.
Wonder what the cuss desires of me ?
Perhaps some contract, or foreign mission—
Or, to bore me about the duties of my oath,
Or, in the contraband *rôle* impress me !
Well, a few sugar plums must quiet him.]
Admit the stranger, I know him well.

Page . . . Your Highness,
I haste to do your bidding.

[*Aside.*]

[His Highness "knows him well," egad !
He seems familiar with all the greasy fellers !
However, I'll keep a vigil eye on the gold spoons
And silver plate, while that rustic stays.]

[*Exunt Page, and enter Gen. Greeley.*]

Abraham . . . Welcome, to our palace,
Thou most proficient mental engineer !
Wait, betimes, while I do call the lacquey,
To sponge thy dusty wardrobe.

Gen. Greeley . . . O, trouble not, sweet Abraham,
About my wardrobe, for on July 4th,
One year ago, it was quite renovated.
But, good Abraham, I'm come not, I'll swear,
All the way from York, to shake my dust
Into your royal court. I am come, commission'd
To plead before your august Lordships,
The bleeding cause of contrabands, in general!
I do demand, that ignoring all other acts,
The Confiscation Act you follow, to the letter.
Issue the Proclamation, and "on to Richmond !"
Then, by St. Paul, the rebels soon must yield,
For I have nine hundred thousand warriors

That to arms will spring, the very moment
You sound the Proclamation trump.

D. of Y. (aside.) . . . [As I have oft prognosticated,
That Greeley will yet ruin the House of Abraham.
I would he were ten leagues in Dixie.]

Well, my honest friend,
It, doth me honor to thus greet thee !
I pray thee be thou quite at home.
But, with aught valuable, meddle not—
Touch nothing here, and I'll give the "pass"
To enjoy the liberty of the palace yard !
Adieu, kind General—adieu!

Gen. Greeley (aside.) . . . Umph! Since these snobs
Are dressed in a little brief authority,
They put on airs, that cast the Bowery Thugs
Quite in the shade. Faith I'll tickle 'em
With my trusty goose quill.]

[*Exit Gen. Greeley.*]

D. of Y. . . . Thank God for that good riddance !
[*Enter Page.*]

Page . . . May it please your gracious Highness
A delegation in the ante-room doth wait
An audience with your Highness.

Abraham . . . Admit them not.
These interruptions doth spoil our purpose.

Salmon . . . Tell them we are not at home to-day.

Page . . . But, my Lords they did me press
Most urgent, and besides, they are your allies,
Most potent in this crisis.

Gideon . . . Speak, rat,
What their wish? Come, make short tongue !

- Page* . . . My Lord, I can but say,
They're black as ace o'spades, and only talk
About "Freedom" and His Highness' "policy."
- Simon* . . . Ah, I smell the rat
These are our party *protégés*. I vow,
We must not these turn off in grief.
- All voices* . . . Admit them! Admit them!
[*Enter Delegation of Contrabands.*]
- Abraham* . . . Welcome, welcome!
Most sable allies in freedom's cause!
- D. of Y.* . . . Welcome, thou motive power
Of the conflict, irrepressible.
- Gideon* . . . What can we do to serve thee!
- 1st Contraband* . . . We hab come, Massa Abraham.
In behalf ob de gemmen ob de purest blood,
To enquire 'bout de collyzashun question.
- Abraham* . . . Aye, aye, ye do flatter me,
To thus take notice o' that important point,
Which is the Alpha and Omega of my reign.
[*Enter Messenger.*]
- Simon* . . . Why this interruption, bastard?
- Mess* . . . Pardon, your Lordships,
But Achilles; failing of ample reinforcements,
By Ajax, as he would, hath, by vast numbers,
Been quite repulsed, by Hector's Rebel Chiefs,
And hence, to Yorktown is retreating.
Achilles did chide me,
As I lov'd our country, to fly with speed
That should distance the fleetest stag,
To reach the palace, and beg your Lordships
The send him succor, instantly, or
As he bade me say, all may be lost.
[*Enter Edwin, Simon having withdrawn.*]

Edwin . . . Begone, ye lousey interloper,
 And tell Achilles to give o'er Richmond—
 That Ajax to guard our royal palace
 Hath been directed. Tell Achilles to flee
 Or fight, for no succor shall he have from me.

Salmon . . . Avaunt! Avaunt!
 We've more important business now!
 Our colored cousins await our pleasure!
 [*Exit Messenger in grief.*]

1st Con . . . As I war sayin', Massa—

Abraham . . . O,—aye, I do remember,
 Thou wouldst learn my arch device
 To make you equals of the famed Aztecs.

2d Con . . . No, Massa, no,
 You won't 'mong dem alligators send us!
 We am told you make dis war on our 'count—
 Dat you promise to make us "free" and "equal,"
 Just as de Declarashun 'spresses it.
 But, Massa, if you send us off from friends,
 Agin our wish and our free inclinashuns,
 What 'comes of de "freedom" and de "quality?"
 We ax you to carry out de one great principle,
 Dat Massa Greeley and Sumner 'splain so much!

Abraham . . . Ah, most illiterate ignoramuses!
 Thou dost ill-comprehend our party teachings.
 We by no means assert you free and equal
 As ourselves, among our noble selves.
 Such admission would most preposterous be.

2d Con . . . Well, Massa, den what you mean!

Abraham . . . We mean that you are "free" to emigrate,
 And "equal" to my plan of gradual extradition,
 If I but give your brethren all free passes,
 And my subjects foot the bills, in "freedom's" name,

That's what we mean. We all do know
 That you are much inferior to our noble race,
 And so long as we all remain together,
 The inferior must be slaves.

1st Con . . . Massa, dem's most 'culiar sent'ments.
 You can't dese chiles fool by any such a stuff.

2d Con . . . We won't go to Quito or Liberia.

3d Con . . . No, dat we won't.
 We'll wid de white folks be free and equal,
 Just as you say Massa Jefferson foretold us.

4th Con . . . If de darkies all dis land do leab,
 What will the bobolishioners do for votes?

5th Con . . . Da can't do widout us,
 And, Massa Abraham, we all see you d—d
 Afore we go wa to hunt up "freedom!"
 Good da, Massa- -good da.

[*Exeunt Contrabands.*]

Abraham (to the Duke of York) . . . I say, good Duke,
 This contraband question is a double knot,
 That more and more puzzles, as we make effort
 To untie it. I'd rather beat the jungle,
 And seize the hyena's snarling whelps,
 In presence of their exasperated dam,
 Than meddle with this contraband wolf.

D. of Y. . . . I see the troubles thicken, and irrepressible
 Are becoming.

*Edwin*¹⁴ . . . This was the fatal rock,
 On which my late master, (or, rather, dupe,)
 King James, did split. His affliction
 Was of the Lecompton type.

¹⁴ Stanton.

Gideon . . . We too late find it an *ignus fatuus*,
And our party its Frankenstein creator,
Deliver us from the monster of our own creation.

Caleb . . . And may we 'scape Acteon's fate,
Who by his own dogs was eaten up.

*Montgomery*¹⁵ . . . Long have I known
It was a phantom, which, for our classic party
'Twere death to hug, and no less fatal
To disembrace.

[*Enter Page.*]

Page . . . Please, your Highness,
The Lord Chancellor of the new Exchequer,
Doth urge your instant presence 'fore him.
Monster frauds have been discovered!
He fears that not less than five hundred millions
Hath thro' sundry agents taken wings!—
Parliament is all a-rage, and Van Wyck
Hath his portfolio filled with proofs!—
The press is loud—sedition stalks abroad?
The people are becoming restive!

Edwin . . . This sedition must be stopped.

Abraham . . . But how?

Edwin . . . Leave that to me.
If your Highness will sign a proclamation
Against "disloyal practices," egad, I'll warrant
To gag these malcontent editors, who
Because our favorites may appropriate
A few paltry millions, do stir up sedition!
A few exemplified victims in Ft. Lafayette
Will affright the rest to silence.

Abraham . . . I will do anything your Lordship urges,
Tho' Proclamations are not my best holt!

¹⁵ Blair.

Caleb . . . Come, let's adjourn,
And con the matter o'er betimes.
[*Exeunt omnes.*]

ACT VII.

SCENE—*The Irrepressible Conflict—Storm in the Cabinet.*

Salmon . . . Good morrow, your Highness,
May I hope your health's par excellent?
You seldom 'pear in more rosy plight.

Abraham . . . Alas, your Lordship,
Appearances do oft, e'en the elect, deceive.
My physical, perhaps, wern't never better,
But in spirit am I most sorely troubled!
Yet, for that, good Lord, no matter!
I would enquire the state of our Exchequer.
The Wall St. barometer bodes storms, I fear!
The tempest swiftly comes. We must take in sail,
For by a private telegram it is announced
That our Legal Tenders won't stand the metal test,
And 'tis feared our plethoric batch of Green Backs
May sink to that old Continental standard,
When a solid cord of picture currency
Would hardly purchase one good brandy sling,
Such as I, for a levy, did once to Suckers sell!
Now, what can be done to save our credit?

Salmon . . . Good Father Abraham
I pray you on that score rest quite at ease,
For my ample "system" will ere long restore
The equilibrium 'twixt mint drops and our rags.
But that's neither here nor there—it's small concern,
Compared with the other matter pressing.

Abraham . . . What "other matter" mean your Lordship?

Salmon . . . Why, 'tis that peerless one,
 Your counsellors have so often urged,
 (Save Montgomery, Caleb and the Duke of York.)
 I mean the *Proclamation*. It will at one fell swoop,
 Crush the rebels and liberate the contrabands.
 'Tis *cheaper* warfare than maintaining armies.

Abraham . . . No, no, I'll die,
 E'er I'll so foul offense commit—
 I cannot—will not listen to't—
 So long as my spinal nerve holds out.
 'Twould let loose a thousand vilest passions,
 That breed in savage breasts, and loathing maggots
 Would pray upon the foetid, decomposing stench,
 Until a servile rising should in butchery end.
 When our jealous neighbors across the sea,
 Would seize the first occasion, as it ripened,
 And add to rebel strength their own vast power !
 And in such event, 'tis clear, we'd lose our throne,
 And our contraband rabbit i' the bargain.
 We'd be like the greedy sow, seeing the moon's disc
 Reflected in the well, her corn did drop,
 To seize upon the new-made cheese,
 And by her greed lost all her supper.

[*Enter Religious Delegation from Chicago.*]

1st Divine . . . We are come, your Highness,
 To present from our great Western Synod,
 A petition, urgent—that you will, at once
 The *Proclamation* issue, and thus to Freedom
 Lend the bent of your almighty power !
 Say, shall we despond, or hope?

Abraham . . . If thou'lt convince me
 That Ethiopes are of more due concernment
 Than thirty millions of the Anglo Saxon race,

And that all our treasure, time and blood,
 Should on black "extractions" be exhausted,
 Then might I listen to your importunities.
 But what can I do—of what avail
 Would be my proclamation, in those parts
 Where I have not the power to send an agent
 To collect a shekel of our revenue?
 Such a proclamation would do no more good,
 Than the "Pope's Bull against the Comet!"
 Or Crocket's swear against the earthquake.

[*Exeunt Delegation, in a huff.*]

D. of Y. . . . Bravo! Bravo!

Edwin . . . I echo bravo, (in a horn.)

Salmon (aside, to the balance.) . . . [My Lords, go steady

We must these foibles humor, yet awhile, until
 We can, by strategy, more *pressure* bring!

His Highness and the Duke of York doth fear
 Too much the puissant Democracy,
 And the conservatives of our own household.
 But never mind—I've most cheering news
 Of events, which, when ripe, will bring
 His Highness down, as Scott did cooney.]

Gideon, (aside, in reply.) . . . Ah, indeed, my Lord,

And to what new *rôle* do you refer, I pray,
 That e'en in hope looks cheering?]

Salmon (aside—responsive) . . . [I will explain:—

You must know that our most faithful friends,
 The Royal Gov'nors of all New England,
 Have convened at Providence, of late—
 A plan of *moral coercion* to devise; and
 By secret correspondence, am I advised,
 That they, with sundry others, at Altoona,
 Soon will meet, for more decisive action:

This convocation is most opportune, indeed,
 Since the main purpose on't is gained !
 Read you not the Proclamation, just o'er the wires ?
 Egad ! His Highness hath been bro't to milk !
 Tho' I confess, he's fired 'twixt wind and water !
 The Proclamation is as much a vain abortion,
 As the choice we made of ruler at the polls !
 However, we must *seem* to applaud it,
 Or else the radical votes we lose.

*Duke of Hampshire*¹⁷ . . . Thou hast spoken wisely,
 Most gracious Cardinal. We must the potion swallow,
 And feign convalescence, tho' the fell disease
 In time becomes incurable !

*Barron de Accident*¹⁸ . . . Ich weis nicht was sie sagen wollen,
 Hoffe es aber bald auszufinden.

*Buckeye Pasha*¹⁹ . . . Away with all other questions,
 And let us serve the notice on Hi Highness,
 That unless Achilles be deposed, at once,
 And Ajax raised to favor, no more troops
 Shall e'er go forth by our commands.
 What say you all?

Bishop Curtin . . . To consent
 To displacement of the brave Achilles,
 Since he hath my Commonwealth defended,
 With so much strategy and good omen,
 Would most foul ingratitude betray,
 And, besides, I know, the rebel Hector
 Would glory in the change, since all else
 Our Chieftains, Hector feareth not
 More than the sportive winds.

17 Governor Ichabod T. Goodwin, of New Hampshire.

18 Governor (?) apparently meant for Edward Bates, but Claiborne F. Jackson was Governor of Missouri.

19 Governor William Dennison, of Ohio.

*Sucker*²⁰ . . . Well, since of his removal
 The valiant Bishop doth not agree
 With the greatest number of us all,
 Let us take our satchels and haste to meet
 His Highness at the Central Palace,
 That we may His Highness congratulate
 On the great wisdom of his Proclamation,
 And then we may such other measures urge
 That will dismiss Achilles, and Ajax favor.
 Come, the cars are waiting—All aboard.
 [Exeunt twelve Royal Governors.]

ACT IX.

SCENE.—*In the Green Room.*

[Enter Abraham, Councillors and Politicians, Nov.—]

Edwin . . . Well, your Highness'
 How think you the elections are decided? I fear
 From the blue complexion of the October fashions,
 That we may suffer still greater losses.
 I e'en do fear New York deserting.

Salmon . . . Poh! Impossible!

Edwin . . . I Sey-mour than perhaps you think I do,
 And I begin to distrust, most seriously,
 The policy of our *lettres de catchet*. That, I fear,
 Hath played the d—l with our purpose.
 The people, instead of being cowed, as 'twas intended,
 Have been stung to madness. Look out,
 I warn ye, for November gales!

Caleb . . . If we are beaten, then the jig is up,
 And we must the Dictatorship abandon,
 Until the people, in more mellow mood,
 Shall off their guard be napping.

²⁰ Governor Richard Yates, Illinois.

Abraham . . . Thy prognostications, my Lords,
Remind me of a story, about the jackass
And the kid, which I'll relate—

Edwin . . . (*interrupting.*) O, d—-n the stories.
I'm sick of stories, and besides, here comes the Page
With a telegram. Now look out for thunder!

[*Enter Page.*]

Edwin . . . How, now—any news from York?

Page . . . Aye, yes, my Lord, sad news, indeed.
Seymour, the "tory," and all his confederates,
Art chosen by most fearful odds,
And Wadsworth, alas, is *hors du combat*!

Salmon . . . Great Moses! Can this be so!
Then I have lost the oysters!

D. of Y. . . . I knew it aforetime, and thus my wager
sav'd;
Your radical measures hath overturn'd our porridge.
As I have oft predicted.

Gideon . . . Well, Page, what news from other quarters?

Page . . . Ah, your Lordships, most doleful.
The Badger State hath topsy-turvy turned,
And the Suckers—right at the very door sill
Of His Highness' hermitage, have "played h—ll,"
While the Wolverines, no more grateful,
Have nearly kicked the beam!

Abraham . . . Alas, a fit response
To the bitter cup of my Proclamation.
O, foul conspirators! Thou hast ruined Rome,
Thou hast Cæsar stabbed. *Et tu Edwin!*
Et tu Salmon! O, Tempore! O, Mores!
Bring me no more news to night!

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

ACT X.

SCENE—*Cabinet Meeting.**Abraham . . .*

Alas, my Lords,

What an unkind hour is this to me !
For scarcely from delirious slumber did I wake,
On this bright, yet ill-boding morn,
E'er a courier, drunk, with dread affright,
Did call me from my couch, to pour
Into my unwilling ears, results, astounding,
Of the Proclamation in Kentucky, where,
As his story runs, the exasperated masses
Do join the rebels by scores and grand divisions !
The Border States are said to be in uproar !
The Contrabands don't "rise" as first you urg'd !
But such as have no power or will to work,
Are pressing on our lines in such vast numbers,
That loyal men do stagger 'neath the weight
That's eating out their substance. I fear,
My Lords, that we've too well succeeded
In uniting the heretofore diverse feuds
That cooled and tempered Southern rage,
And that the loyal North we have divided !

While I did the middle course conserve,
While I did Ajax o'erthrow, and did "modify"
Simon, and Brave Hunter, and while I did
Our Simon from my counsel banish,
All things went merry as a marriage bell !
The North was then a unit of power !
She did freely bleed her many millions;
And from her hill sides, plains and valleys,
Came forth her sturdy and brave legions—
Mighty and terrible as the hosts of Xerxes !
In the West—my own proud West—

The car of our triumphs was moving on !
Into our hands fell Henry and Donelson,
By the valor of troops that never quailed—
The prestige of my victorious army was felt
At Shiloh, Pea Ridge and Island Ten,
While Memphis and Mississippi's Queen,
Fell easy preys to my chivalrous legions !

And, no less mark'd were achievements
On our Eastern coast, where to attack,
Was victory, and victory us deserted not,
Until Parliament and Cabinet essayed
To lead, and dictate plans beyond their ken,
Or power to execute. Politicians took the field—
Not in person—for they were chivalric bastards !

Instead of trusting to our war chieftains,
They chalk'd campaigns in the caucus room,
And did them execute in the civil forum !
Heroes they made of cornstalks, alas !
To be riven by the first ill-omened blast !
Military science they whistled down the wind,
And mock'd at "spades" and "strategy !"
They've press'd me night and day—"on to Richmond,"
By measures, routes, and geometric curves,
Of which they, themselves, as the unborn babe,
Were ignorant. *Cause*, they seldom study,
But jump at theories, to reach *effect* !
When our prosperity was at its highest flow,
Did they howl like packs of arrant wolves !
To stop enlistments, and to the Proclamation
Leave the job of crushing treason.

Well,

To please the malcontents, I the Bull did issue.
Behold what followed !—the forthwith ca'l

For six hundred thousand victims, new hecatombs
 To fill, and mines to blow up more treasure !
 And behold disaster on disaster, since,
 Without a parallel, excuse, or palliation:
 And all to please the whim of party hucksters !
 Thrice hath our Grand Army—Potomac's pride !
 Been repulsed and flayed by Hector's ragged serfs,
 And now I find me in that dread dilemma
 Where to "modify," my new *rôle*—under pressure
 chosen,
 Would my reputation forever compromise,
 And I be styled fool—dastard—nose of wax !
 And yet, to persevere, on the chart ill drafted,
 Would destroy my country, and dethrone my power.
 So much for Buckingham ! [Aside.]
 [O, fell disasters !—ripe fruits of giving o'er
 To clamors of a rabble mob, insatiate.
 O, Heaven's vengeance, swift as lightning's bolt,
 Resign my Cabinet—make room for Holt !]
 [Faints, and subsides into an easy chair.]

D. of Y.— See, His Highness swoons !
 His griefs do overcome him. Call the Page,
 And summon quick the Knight of Physic.

Edwin.—Ho ! there, without ! Help !

[Enter Citizen.]

Cit. . . . Pray, my Lord, what's the matter ?

Edwin. . . . O, nothing, save His Highness hath a fit;
 That's what's the matter.

Abraham (recovering) . . . Cease for me, your pother,
 For, in body am I quite well, indeed !
 'Tis my country's cause that hath o'ercome
 My agitated spirit . . . and *thou* the cause !

Edwin (agitated)—*Me* the cause !

Abraham . . . *You* . . . aye, and the whole pack of Radicals,
Who hath forc'd me to this unlucky blunder.

[*Enter Messenger.*]

Mess . . . Your most worshipful Highness,
I am come, by order of your chieftain Ambrose,
To' quaint you of reverses diabolical,
That your Grand Army hath just befel,
At Fredericksburg, on the fatal Rappahannock;
Your faithful legions are badly cut to pieces,
And Ambrose²¹ hath across the stream retired,
Shorn of warriors, near fifteen thousand!
As brave as e'er did charge a bayonet!

Abraham . . . What needs Ambrose . . . succor?

Mess . . . Nay, your Highness;
He did chide me, that of troops and ammunition
He had abundance, but, less rash orders
Would better suit his, and the nation's purpose!

Edwin . . . That Ambrose is an arrant fool,
To thus cast suspicion on my orders!
I bade him take Fredericksburg at any cost,
And then "on to Richmond," by the shortest cut,
As pre-arranged in our party caucus;
And if he's failed, the blame be on his skirts!

Abraham.... Enough, enough!
My heart doth within me freeze to zero,
And more than ever am I now convinc'd
That party caucus can ne'er take Richmond!
The Proclamation have I uttered....fatal blunder!
And deposed Achilles . . . thrice fatal error!

Alas! I feel like one
Whom the vile intrigues of petty politicians
Have so incensed, that I am reckless

²¹ Burnside.

What I do to spite ill-fortune.

Alas, alas !

I am so weary of these sad disasters
That on any chance would I set my life
To mend it, or to be rid on't.

So cowards fight when they can fly no longer . . .
So doves do peck the falcon's piercing talons . . .
So desp'rate soldiers, hopeless of their lives,
Breathe out invectives 'gainst the officers !
Dreadful is the fate whom despair hath forced
To censure Fate . . . and pious hope forego !

All hope is lost . . . welcome any fate !
Save hope deferred, to be destroyed.
My Court's dismissed, and to my sad pillow
Will I pour out my silent grief.

Exeunt omnes.]

ACT XI.

SCENE . . . *Senatorial Caucus in the Capitol.*

[Enter thirty-one Senators.]

Fessenden . . . Most noble Senators,

We are to this solemn purpose call'd
To take action on the late disaster !
Unless something shall be quickly done,
To rescue our army, from oblivion,
The feast of fatal blunders, we might
As well all at once resign.

Wade . . . But what can we do ?

Will the noble Sen'tor some "Maine" end state
That we can by this caucus 'complish?

Fes . . . We must revolutionize
The Cabinet. Abraham, we cannot stir,

But we must demand a change at once,
Among his effete counsellors.

At least, the Duke of York
Must walk the plank! So should Edward,
In fact, the more the better, for then,
We all do stand a better chance!

Trum . . . That's what's the matter.

Fes . . . I do affirm the Duke of York
To be the cause of our sad reverses.
He is the Jonah of the Cabinet, and then,
He doth denounce the proclamation
As an idle bagatelle.

Sumner . . . He must go out, or else no peace
Will Abraham enjoy, Mark that.
I move that we His Highness do address
A firm, yet most decisive protest
Against the further party toleration
Of the imbecile clogs around him.
The motion's carried, and five of our number
Shall bear to Abraham our potent wishes.
Our purposes done, I declare this caucus
Dissolved till further orders.²²

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

SCENE 2d—*Cabinet Meeting.*

[*Enter Committee of five Senators.*]

Abraham . . . Good morrow, your honors;
What's now agog in Parliament?

Fes . . . We are come, your Highness,
As select men from last evening's caucus,
To favor your Highness with this Protest.

[*Hands out a paper, which Abraham reads.*]

²² William P. Fessenden, Maine, Benjamin F. Wade, Ohio, Lyman Trumbull, Ill.,
Charles Sumner, Mass.

Abraham... And is this your *rôle*?

My Court will understand the purpose:
Those doughty Senators do of me demand
A modification of my Cabinet. faith;
And the Duke of York, most faithful,
At least shall go. What say my Court?

D. of Y. I say, your Highness,
Here's my portfolio . . . take it back.
I can't be useful unless I'm wholly black.

Salmon . . . And here's my portfolio, full of checks;
Take it, and I'll run my chance for Senator.

Montgomery . . . And, your Highness,
I, too am ready for the slaughter.

Edwin . . . I'll see 'em d . . . d e'er I
Will yield an Inch. I'd rather die.

Abraham . . . Take back your folios, all;
We're all upon ill fortune's track,
And together we will sink or swim.
Go back, ye intermeddling Solons,
Do your worst, but unless your'e the stronger,
I'll stand *this* "pressure" a little longer.

[*Exeunt Committee, exasperated.*]

Edwin . . . A pretty bold attempt, your Highness
For little boys to *Wade* beyond their depths,
Without bladders 'neath their arms.

[*Enter Halleck.*]

Edwin . . . Here comes the fatal cause
Of all our most malicious ills.

Halleck . . . Such epithets address you sir, to me?
I'll not brook such contemptuous slurs.
Sir, you are a coward, and never fought for spurs.

Edwin . . . *Me* a coward . . . then you're a lying whelp.
And dare not resent, without procuring help.

Halleck . . . (Slaps his face.) Take that, poltroon, my
legal tender,

And show how brave you play your own defender.

[*They clinch and have a savage set-to.*]

Abraham . . . My rabid Lords,

It grieves me sore to see this cruel sport,

Strewing blood and hair about my virtuous court.

D. of Y. . . . Most vicious mastiffs,

I pray you both, preserve your strength;

You'll need it all on ropes, at length.

Chandler . . . Let them fight.

I admire the pluck they're now begetting;

It so pleaseth me to see blood-letting.

See the claret; good Lord, how Stanton reels,

And Halleck chucks him out . . . head, neck and heels.

[*Exeunt, actors, drama and all.*]

MORAL.

Sad is the moral . . . brother shouldn't war with brother,

Nor in the Cabinet sho'd they maul each other.

May God in future forbid such exhibitions,

And rid the country of *such* vile politicians,

Lest they our rights and liberties destroy,

Is the ardent prayer of the Carrier Boy.

FINIS

